



U.S. Department of Justice

**Stephen J. Murphy
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001
211 West Fort Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277
Fax: (313) 226-3561*

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758
Vera Fedorak -ATF (313) 202-3407

May 16, 2007

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Terry Crooks

**SOUTHFIELD MAN INDICTED FOR ARSON
FIRE AT CHEETAH'S STRIP CLUB**

Terry Crooks, 24, of Southfield was indicted by a federal grand jury in Detroit on charges of maliciously damaging by fire, a building used in an activity affecting interstate commerce, specifically, Cheetah's On the Strip Gentlemen's Club, located at 19245 W. 8 Mile Road, Detroit, Michigan, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Valerie Goddard, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

The indictment charges that on or about March 3, 2005, Crooks intentionally set fire to the building, causing extensive damage to the interior of the business. According to the federal complaint filed in this matter, Crooks, an employee of the cleaning company which cleaned Cheetah's, entered the premises following business hours and traveled to the basement area, where the fire was started. Video surveillance tapes were recovered from the building following the fire. The complaint states that the video tapes depict the perpetrator entering the building through the rear doors, pouring a liquid on the floor in the basement area, and exiting the building as the flames engulfed the interior of the building.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "The risks of danger to the lives of people, as well as the losses to property that it causes, make arson a crime that we take very seriously. This is particularly true when the fire was set in a busy commercial area."

Special Agent in Charge Valerie J. Goddard of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in Michigan states that the evidence showed the fire was an act of arson. "The crime of arson is one of the most difficult types of cases to solve. Results of our joint investigation sends a message to the public that crimes of violence, such as this case of arson, are not tolerated," Goddard said.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted, Crooks faces penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by special agents of the ATF. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Craig Weier and Susan Gillooly.